

MINUTES
BROWN COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY
Monday, August 15, 2016, 3:30 p.m.
City Hall, 100 N. Jefferson Street, Room 604
Green Bay, WI 54301

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ann Hartman – Chair, Sup. Andy Nicholson – Vice-Chair, Tom Deidrick, Corday Goddard, and Andy Williams

OTHERS PRESENT: Robyn Hallet, Pat Leifker, Stephanie Schmutzer, Megan Walker, Rob Miller, and Attorney Kristen Hooker

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Approval of the minutes from the July 18, 2016, meeting of the Brown County Housing Authority.

A motion was made by A. Nicholson and seconded by C. Goddard to approve the minutes from the July 18, 201, Brown County Housing Authority meeting. Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS:

2. Letter from HUD dated July 27, 2016 regarding award of FY 2016 Family Self Sufficiency funding.

R. Hallet explained a letter that was received from HUD informing the Authority that the Family Self Sufficiency funding was awarded.

A. Nicholson made a motion to receive and place on file, seconded by T. Deidrick. Motion carried.

A. Hartman introduced guest R. Miller and referenced the outline that was provided to the Authority on the topics of his concerns.

A motion was made by A. Nicholson and seconded by C. Goddard to open the floor for interested parties. Motion carried.

R. Miller thanked the Authority for allowing him to speak. He explained that his goal was to promote more people from the populace of Brown County to show up to the meetings. He informed the Authority that he made this presentation ten years ago, but it did not have any effect. R. Miller explained to the Authority that 80 percent of the populous works from nine am to five pm. He stated that the people who are participating in the HCV program, the people paying the taxes to support the program, and people who want to serve on the board are more than likely working nine am to five pm. The fact that these people are working during the time of the BCHA meeting means they are disqualified from serving on the board. R. Miller asked the Authority to consider moving the meeting to a later time. He stated that he understands that some committees meet during the day, but that the bulk of the committees that involved the representative government meet in the evening.

R. Miller explained some of the benefits of holding meetings in the evening. He stated that a political benefit to holding meetings in the evening is it would make it easier for the public to attend and participate. He suggested that when people attend the meetings they may be more likely to run for council, serve on a board, or just become more involved in the governmental process. R. Miller stated that when there is a voter participation rate of 50 percent or less, more public participation would be very positive. R. Miller stated that the BCHA is not a small program, at \$10 to 12 million dollars, and has a substantial effect on the Brown County community. R. Miller provided six examples of how other businesses use crowd sourcing to get the public involved. His suggestion to

the Authority is that by involving the other 250,000 people of Brown County the Authority would get new ideas, because everyone thinks differently or has had different experiences. R. Miller states he thinks it would be a benefit to the BCHA, Brown County, and the representative democracy.

R. Miller referenced an article that he read written by a Green Bay police officer about the large number of police calls that the department was getting which involved HCV recipients. Shortly after that article was published R. Miller became a Brown County Supervisor and a cross check had been conducted between the police calls and the HCV program. The cross check was able to demonstrate that the HCV program was producing a lot of police calls. R. Miller stated that his position is that he does not believe that the HCV program should be a scholarship program for crime.

R. Miller explained that his neighborhood, Navarino, has seen a tremendous turn around since that time. R. Miller stated that the improvement cannot be attributed purely to the background investigations done, because the police department, City of Green Bay, and Neighborworks all had a large impact as well. But because of the large turn around in the HCV program it was no longer subsidizing crime.

R. Miller referenced an article on the Delaware State Housing Authority which he suggested the Authority read. He recommended that the Authority debate the pros and cons of the structure of their program. He stated that it is very healthy for the Authority to have new ideas submitted. The idea of the Delaware program came from outside the Authority, which justifies his idea that bringing new people and new ideas into the Authority would be beneficial to the program.

R. Miller stated that he is not an HCV landlord and has not been for about ten years. Three years ago he listed a property that he had available for rent, and the property was rented to a person not on the HCV program. At that time he talked to ICS to get his name off of their website as a potential landlord for HCV recipients, but claims his name and number were not taken off the list. He stated that despite other conversations about removing his name he is still getting calls from HCV recipients about a property for rent. He suggested that this is proof that there are improvements that need to be made to the program. By not getting his name off the list it has wasted his time as well as the participant's time. He suggested looking into improvements to the way ICS lists possible landlords would be a benefit to the participants as well as the landlords.

R. Miller suggested that the Authority should be cross checking convictions with the addresses of the HCV properties. He claimed that by doing that himself he was able to find three convictions easily. He stated that by July of 2017, everything will be submitted electronically in the court system. He added that he does think Langan and Associates as well as ICS are doing a great job at keeping criminals out of the HCV program, but that by cross checking addresses with convictions there is an additional safety net put in place. He also suggested that if another person wanted to live in a HCV property that they should have to apply, help pay rent, and have the background check done. By doing that the Authority would know exactly who is living there, there would be more revenue coming in, and the neighborhoods would be a little safer.

R. Miller stated that it is very difficult for the general public to contact the BCHA commissioners, because their phone numbers and email addresses are not listed on the website. He stated that he has never seen a representative body that did not publish commissioner's names, emails, and phone numbers. He stated that he does not believe that the Authority is consciously trying to keep the public uninformed. But he believes that over time, with the right invitations, that people will participate.

R. Miller stated he spoke to a blind person about internet use. This conversation caused him to think about how difficult it may be for blind people to access the BCHA website. He questioned how a blind person would access the BCHA website? R. Miller stated that even a person who was not blind would have a very difficult, almost impossible time, finding the commissioners phone numbers

and addresses. He suggested that the Authority look into a program to help disabled people access the BCHA website.

R. Miller thanked the Authority for the opportunity to speak, and opened the floor for any questions that the commission had.

T. Deidrick explained that he has been on the BCHA board for several years and was present when R. Miller gave his presentation ten years ago. He said that they did take R. Millers suggestion and moved the meeting to an early evening time. T. Deidrick indicated that they moved the meeting time for two or three months in a row and no one showed up, so the Authority elected to go back to the original time. R. Miller responded by saying that there will be a long growth period before the public start attending the meetings. He stated that it comes down to the Authority being welcoming. R. Miller suggested inviting school kids to attend meetings. He stated that City Council invites school kids to a session, and that he thinks it would be an excellent idea for the BCHA to do so as well. He explained that if you invite eight year olds to the meetings, their parents come along. He agreed with T. Deidrick, but stated that it may take six to nine months before a member of the public attends a meeting. He stated that not everyone can adjust their time to attend a meeting at 3:30 pm and the Authority should recognize that.

T. Deidrick referenced R. Millers discussion on people with criminal backgrounds staying with HCV recipients. He stated that the Authority has done a lot in the last eight to ten years to assure that an individual with a criminal background isn't getting a voucher. R. Miller stated that he did agree that the background checks being done have been outstanding. His problem is when people get on the HCV program and have people living in their house who are committing crimes. He agrees that it is a difficult judgement to make. He emphasized that the criminal background checks to get onto the program have been phenomenal. He stated that the issue is people will live with an HCV recipient and then commit a crime. He agrees that it is very difficult to monitor who is staying at the residence, but with the electronic filing it should be very easy to pull up the addresses that the person gives on their citation and compare it to the HCV address lists. T. Deidrick stated if there is an apartment building the address of the apartment building will be listed, but not the actual apartment number. He questioned in that case would R. Miller suggest the Authority cross check very apartment in the building. R. Miller stated that the Authority would have to have the apartment number in order to do the cross check.

A. Hartman stated that the Authority needed to conclude R. Miller's discussion because of time constraints and thanked R. Miller for his attendance.

A motion was made by C. Goddard and seconded by T. Deidrick to go back to the regular meeting.

REPORTS:

3. Report on Housing Choice Voucher Rental Assistance Program:

A. Preliminary Applications

P. Leifker reported that for the month of July there were 202 preliminary applications received.

B. Unit Count

The unit count for the month of July was 3,126.

C. Housing Assistance Payments Expenses

The HAP expenses totaled \$1,313,130.

D. Housing Quality Standard Inspection Compliance

There were a total of 301 inspections, of which 162 passed the initial inspection, 47 passed the reevaluation, 50 resulted in a fail, and 42 were no-shows.

- E. Program Activity/52681B (administrative costs, portability activity, SEMAP)
P. Leifker reported on the data from May and stated the additional month's reports will be sent out as soon as he receives them. For May there were 224 port outs with an associated HAP expense of \$200,144. ICS was overspent by \$12,724.83 and the FSS program was underspent by \$3,180.50.
- F. Family Self-Sufficiency Program (client count, participation levels, new contracts, graduates, escrow accounts, and homeownership)
For the month of July, there were 83 participants enrolled in the FSS program. Of that number, 54 participants were at level one, 12 were at level two, nine were at level three, and eight were at level four. There were five new contracts established, zero graduates, 34 open escrow accounts, and 51 homeownership clients.
- G. VASH Reports (new VASH and active VASH)
P. Leifker reported that there was one new VASH participant for the month of July and there are 28 active participants in the VASH program.
- H. Langan Investigations Criminal Background Screening and Fraud Investigations
For the month of July, there were zero new investigations assigned, ten previous investigations were closed, and four remain active. There were 93 applications processed, all of which were approved. P. Leifker then displayed the charts of the initial applications for July broken down by municipality, showing the greatest number of applications from residents of the City of Green Bay, followed by De Pere. Fraud investigation by municipality was similar with the majority occurring in Green Bay, followed by Ashwaubenon and De Pere.

OLD BUSINESS:

- 4. Discussion and possible action regarding BCHA loan on property at 1239 St. Clair Street in Green Bay, WI.

R. Hallet stated that this item is in regards to a BCHA loan that was provided to a homeowner to help her rehab her home. The Authority was not made aware of the sale of the home until several months after it was sold. Typically the loan must be repaid upon sale of the home or when the property is no longer the owner's primary residence. The Authority found out from the loan holder that she was informed by her realtor that because the loan is 30 years old that she did not need to repay it. At that point R. Hallet asked Attorney Kristen Hooker from Brown County Corporation Council to get involved.

A motion was made by A. Williams and seconded by C. Goddard to go into closed session to discuss details of this loan with Attorney Hooker. Motion carried.

A. Hartman read the closed session language. Roll call vote for closed session was taken with all in agreement to go into closed session. Closed session began at 4:01 PM.

After the closed session finished, a motion was made by A. Williams and seconded by A. Nicholson to go back to open session. Motion carried. Open session resumed at 4:20 PM.

A motion was made by T. Deidrick and seconded by C. Goddard to implement the action that was discussed in closed session and review the information at the next meeting. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 5. Discussion and possible action regarding all other BCHA loans.

R. Hallet explained that this item is in regards to all BCHA loans and that it is advisable that the Authority rerecord all loans that are approaching the 30 year mark so it is ensured that a lien remains on the property after the initial 30 year period if needed.

A motion was made by C. Goddard and seconded by T. Deidrick to rerecord all BCHA loans as they approach the 30 year mark. Motion carried.

INFORMATIONAL:

6. Review of Budget section of Lead the Way training.

The Authority members reviewed the questions from the quiz from the Budget section of the Lead the way training.

BILLS:

S. Schmutzer indicated that included in the bills is one to refund a TRIP interception for someone who the Authority had intercepted her taxes, but she had already paid off her debt to the Authority.

A motion was made by T. Deidrick and seconded by A. Nicholson to approve the bills. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

S. Schmutzer explained that there wasn't anything significant to point out this month.

A. Nicholson motioned to receive and place on file, seconded by A. Williams. Motion carried.

STAFF REPORT:

7. Date of next meeting: September 19, 2016.

R. Hallet stated that the WAHA conference is coming up in September and will overlap the next BCHA meeting so she will be unable to attend the BCHA meeting herself, but S. Schmutzer will attend.

The Authority was reminded that they are invited to attend the WAHA conference as well as the NAHRO (National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials) national training being held this year in New Orleans.

A. Nicholson questioned what the location of the September WAHA conference was. R. Hallet responded that the conference was being held in Eau Clair.

Commissioners resumed discussion in regards to R. Miller's comments from the beginning of the meeting.

A. Nicholson proposed a question in regards to R. Miller's statement on background checks on participants in the HCV program. The question was how are inspections ordered and performed, and if residents are given notice before the inspectors arrive at their home. R. Hallet explained that the Housing Quality Standard Inspections are scheduled in advance and both landlord and tenant are notified because someone does need to be at the residence to let the inspector in. These inspections cannot be a surprise visit.

A. Hartman indicated that as she understands it, R. Miller's complaint is that there are people in HCV housing who have someone living in the residence without being on the lease. R. Miller's question was why the Authority cannot catch them when the unreported household member gives law enforcement that address as their home address for citations. A. Nicholson stated that this problem was very common in the past. Previous employees of Langan and Associates once said it was a common issue that they were noticing. A. Nicholson added that he hasn't heard any feedback from the current Langan and Associates staff on issues like this.

S. Schmutzer explained that many of the court cases that the Authority takes on are because people are getting caught by listing addresses of HCV residences on law enforcement citations. The Authority is able to go back to the date of the infraction and compare the address and the name of the tenant with the name on the citation, but often an investigation is not started until after someone makes a complaint.

R. Hallet stated that if the ICS inspector does notice that there is someone staying at the house that doesn't appear to be on the lease the inspector could initiate a more in-depth inspection.

T. Deidrick added that in the past if there was a complaint of unreported household members Langan and Associates would do a stake out to confirm if it was true. If a neighbor suspects that someone not on the lease is staying in the house they are able to call and submit a complaint which will be followed up on.

A. Nicholson questioned if it was against the law to publicly share what homes are receiving HCV assistance. R. Hallet confirmed that that information is not public knowledge. A. Nicholson followed up by questioning how the public would know to report activities at a home if that information is not accessible. T. Deidrick stated that normally it is the person living in the home that tells their neighbors or friends that they are receiving HCV assistance. S. Schmutzer added the often times the landlord calls in the reports because they know their tenant is a HCV recipient and they have noticed suspicious activity in the home.

A. Hartman stated that in her neighborhood there were squatters in the home next to hers. Inspection was called several times and nothing was ever found until the attic was checked. In the attic they found mattresses and belongings of the people who were supposed to be living there. A. Hartman stated she understands R. Miller's point, but that sometimes it is hard to find the offenders or to substantiate suspicions of them living there.

A. Nicholson questioned how many HCV inspectors there are, to which R. Hallet responded that there are two. A. Nicholson also questioned if Lagan and Associates did inspections. R. Hallet responded that they do not do inspections, but rather they do the investigations. She stated sometimes in order to not lead the resident on that they are being investigated Langan and Associates will say they are inspectors and request access into the home. This makes the resident believe they are there to look at the property, and not to investigate whether unauthorized guests are staying at the home.

A. Williams expressed doubt about the accuracy of R. Miller's statistics that 80 percent of the populous of Brown County works during the day. The term populous includes children, elderly and stay-at-home parents and besides that, there are a lot of people who work nights.

In regards to R. Miller's statement on blind people having a difficult time accessing the BCHA website, T. Deidrick stated that there are several software options available to help blind people read pieces of paper as well as computer monitors. A. Williams stated that the Authority had not received any complaints from people with disabilities having a problem accessing BCHA information.

A. Williams stated that he doesn't disagree that the time of the BCHA meeting could be changed. A. Hartman added that she would be happy to change the time of the meetings if R. Miller thinks that it is that important. A. Williams stated that with all of the Brown County municipalities' meetings, if people want to get involved in their local government, they have plenty of options. A. Williams inquired if A. Hartman received any requests from the public to have the meeting time moved so they could attend. A. Hartman stated that she did not receive any requests. A. Hartman added that R. Miller would argue that no requests were made because the Authority members contact information is not available to the public.

A. Williams added that he checked the Brown County website and was only able to find Troy Streckenbach's office phone number, but not his personal contact information. He questioned why

R. Miller has a concern about the BCHA board members' contact information being readily available when Brown County elected officials' information isn't even accessible. A. Williams stated that the public is able to contact R. Hallet and request to talk to one of the BCHA commissioners. A. Hartman indicated that she believes R. Miller would be happy if the commissioners email address were added to the website. A. Williams agreed, but also argued that it is fairly easy to contact a BCHA commissioner, and would be even easier for a landlord in the program to contact them.

T. Deidrick questioned if the Authority wanted to put this issue on a future agenda for discussion. A. Hartman suggested that if the Authority were to bring back any of the issues that it be held off until after the September meeting because R. Hallet would not be present at the September meeting. The commissioners agreed that none of the issues were urgent.

A. Nicholson suggested that R. Miller's request to be removed from the list of landlords should not be a problem. S. Schmutzer explained that R. Miller is off the list on the ICS website, but there may be old listings still circulating in the community and that may be how participants are getting his contact information. A. Hartman stated that she did suggest to R. Miller that tenants could have printed off the list and years later when they were looking for a place to rent they were using the old list of possible landlords. A. Hartman stated that at the October meeting the Authority could discuss some of the issues from R. Miller's discussion.

A. Hartman questioned if all of the other Brown County commissions have all of the commissioners phone numbers and email addresses on the website. A. Nicholson stated that without looking at the website he would not know for sure. T. Deidrick explained that it is public information, and all the public would have to do is contact R. Hallet to request it. A. Williams added that finding that information is not hard. A. Hartman suggested that she thinks R. Miller is saying that it may be difficult for someone who is not computer savvy, but that if they aren't able to find R. Hallet's phone number the information desk at City Hall would be able to connect them to her office. R. Hallet suggested that if none of the commissioners were opposed to having their name and contact information on the website that that would be an easy change to make. T. Deidrick suggested finding out what the other commissions are doing, and if they would be willing to add the same information to their websites. S. Schmutzer suggested that each commissioner could be provided their own city or county email address, if they are concerned about providing their personal information. S. Schmutzer added that by creating a city or county email the commissioners would not continue to receive emails even after they left the board. A. Williams stated he didn't have a concern with his personal email being given out. A. Hartman requested that R. Hallet find out what the other commissions are doing as far as providing contact information.

A motion was made by A. Nicholson and seconded by T. Deidrick to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 4:38 pm.

MW: RAH